



CHURCH OF OUR LADY IMMACULATE AND ST ANDREW

16 Nightingale Road, HITCHIN, SG5 1QS
(In the care of the Augustinians of the Assumption)



Mass Times
Saturday 6pm
Sunday 8.30am, 10.30am, 5pm
Monday – Saturday 10am
Reconciliation Saturday 10.30am
during Exposition. All Masses are
livestreamed [Livestream Mass](#)

Newsletter No 2078

16th – 23rd December 2023 – 3rd Sunday Advent - Year B



Prayer for those seeking sanctuary

Lord Jesus, we pray for those members of God's family who come here to escape oppression, poverty, persecution, violence, and war. Let them not meet with fear, doubt or suspicion from the local population. May those seeking sanctuary in our country receive a warm and generous welcome as they settle-in and commence their new life. Joyfully, we welcome the many gifts they bring to us. We make this prayer in Jesus' name. Amen.

Readings Is 61:1-2, 10-11, Thess 5:16-24, John 1:6-8, 19-28

Entrance Antiphon: Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice. Indeed, the Lord is near.

Psalm: My soul rejoices in my God.

Intercession: We pray to the Lord

Response: Lord, hear us!

Next Week: Is 7:1-5, 8-12, 14, 16, Rom 16:25-27, Luke 1:26-38

Ramblings Lighting the pink candle on the Advent wreath heralds the good news of Jesus birth just around the corner. For the privileged few, the reception class acted the nativity in church this week with freshness and with eyes filled with wonder, brightness and light, filling all those present with joy and delight. They offered us a real live reason to rejoice.

Guadete (*rejoice*) is a Latin word that expresses it all, both in song, in meaning and in newness of life. It offers us a theme contrary to the tragic happenings in the world. The story of Christ's birth speaks of rejoicing, renewal and new life. Even the colour pink speaks to us because *rose is seen as a "brightening" of the ordinary violet and thus symbolizes joy!*

Macrina Wiederkehr offers us this:

Climbing down through the stars to the stars on earth.

The divine face meshing with the human, heaven touching earth: we call it Incarnation! You came as a star led by a star through the stars to the stars.

We never knew we were stars until you came. O God, we welcome you.

We lovingly share our frail human flesh and our starry planet with you.

We wrap you in our flesh.

We embrace you with joy as you reach out your hands and your heart to become one of us.

It was Mary who first wrapped you in our human flesh.

Her womb, the first altar consecrated from all eternity to be your first earthly home.

How holy is this earth!

Your glory streamed through our lives like stars, the day you leaned down from heaven.

You came to help us see our glory.

Following the star we lean into your glory, and in your light, we see the light.

We never knew we were stars until you came!

Diary Dates

Sun 17 December



Coffee Morning after 8.30am and 10.30am will be provided by **One World/Live Simply Group**. All are welcome.

Mon 18 December

9.30am Parent & Toddlers Hall

6pm & 7.15pm Beavers/Cubs – Scout Hall

Tue 19 December

10.30am "Tuesday Chat" Hall

11am Setting up crib – all welcome to come help.

2pm Craft Circle LCR

7pm FHC Session 7 Hall

7pm Scouts - Scout Hall

Weds 20 December

6pm Feed Up Warm Up Scout Hall

7pm RCIA EC

Thurs 21 December

10.30am St Pio Meeting Hall

1pm Italian Club Hall

6.30pm Brownies – Term Ends

Friday 22 December

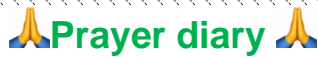

2-4pm Hitchin Pantry Scout Hall

6.30pm Service of Carols and readings for Christmas. This will be followed by mince pies and mulled wine in the hall and a celebration to say goodbye to Rob Hitchcock as he leaves our parish. The leaving card for Rob is available to sign in the porch this weekend after Masses. Donations to a leaving gift can be left in the parish office in an envelope saying Rob leaving.

Sat 23 December

1-3pm Hitchin Pantry Scout Hall

Please note Michael Hill's funeral is Monday 18th Dec at 1.30pm at Pirton Church (not 1pm).

 **Prayer diary** 

Opportunities for communal prayer

Tuesday 11.30am Meditation Emmanuel Centre

No Eucharistic Service

Wednesday 9.30am Rosary Church


12pm Charismatic Prayer UCR

Thursday 6.30pm Meditation Emmanuel Centre

7 – 8pm Exposition Church

All are welcome for private prayer at any time in the church which is open 8.30am - 7pm

KISS Coffee Morning - thank you to all those who prepared, baked, helped, and supported last Sunday's KISS Coffee morning which raised **£170**. We, as always, are blessed to be supported with the generosity of you, our parish community and a big thank you to all those wonderful people who give their help on the day - in the raffle, tidying up and clearing away tables. This year our parish community has raised in total approximately £920 for KISS. – just brilliant. Thank you all so much as I bring warm Christmas Wishes and New Year blessings from the KISS Charity and KISS Community in Uganda.

 We pray for **Margaret Smyth** whose funeral is on **Thursday 11 January 2024 at 10am**. May she rest in peace and rise in glory and may the Lord comfort her family.

Thanks to all who attended and/or helped at the Orpheus choir evening last Saturday. It was an enjoyable evening and **£466** was raised to support those seeking sanctuary in this area.

For the **children's Christmas Mass** at **5pm on 24th Dec** (or any Christmas Mass) children are encouraged to bring a gift of food to the crib during the offertory procession. These will go to **Hitchin Pantry** who need the following: Tinned Tuna, Easy Cook rice, Cereals, Tea bags and Coffee.

Crib Offering to support the Catholic Children's Society The Catholic Children's Society (CCS) is helping local families in crisis who are struggling to put food on the table, keep warm and provide a safe home for their children. Recently CCS helped a mother and her two young sons who were evicted from their home when the landlord sold the property. They were moved into Local Authority housing but the flat was completely empty, cold and drafty. Their previous home was furnished and they had no money to buy even a bed – the mother and children slept on her coat on the bare floor. Both children had asthma and their health quickly deteriorated in the cold flat. CCS provided a grant to help them buy beds, warm fleece bedding, thick duvets and rugs to keep the family warm through winter. The mother said:

"I cannot believe the difference this has made. I can tuck my children into their very own beds at night and keep them warm and cosy. Thank you for caring about us".

There are many more vulnerable families in need of support and our parish will be donating our Crib Offering to support this important work. You can donate at the Crib or via the CCS website www.cathchild.org.uk/crib

Crib assembly will take place at 11am on Tuesday 19th Dec. If you are able to help with this please turn up on the day. We also need **greenery** to decorate the back drop – please bring **fir tree greenery** to the back door of the presbytery by Monday 18th December.

Other dates

20th Dec 8pm Rotary Carol singing in Hitchin Market Place. Hitchin Band and St Mary's Choir will be leading the singing and the carols will be introduced by the Rev Chris Bunce, of St Mary's, with ministers of other local churches. All welcome.



Assumptionist Eastern mission. (Eastern Europe). Turkey. There is one community at Kadikoy which is where the famous council of Calcedon was held. Greece. We have a parish in Athens which caters for the very many people from the Philippines and a large community of Nigerians.



Amoris Laetitia the joy of love 364 Pastoral Perspectives - Proclaiming the Gospel of the Family Today
Pastoral care of families can draw upon the contributions of psychology, sociology, marital therapy and counselling

We are a Safeguarding parish EduCare (now part of Tes) safeguarding leaflets can be downloaded from our website at <https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/hitchin/diocese/safeguarding-in-our-parishes/>
Safeguarding representatives: Trish Bonnett and Maria Greene via 01462 459126



If you have a need for prayer, please contact **Mary** on **07759195487** with your prayer intentions

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